UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *26 March 2008*.

2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.   2b) ☐ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4,6,8,10,12,13,16-20,22 and 24-26* is/are pending in the application.

   4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4,6,8,10,12,13,16-20,22 and 24-26* is/are allowed.

6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

   Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

   Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

   a) ☐ All   b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

   1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

   2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

   3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
   Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
   Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1.   This action is responsive to communications: Amendments filed 3/26/2008.

2.   Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16-20, 22, and 24-26 are pending in this case.

Claims 1, 10, and 12 are independent claims. Claims 1, 6, 8, 10, and 12 have been

amended. Claims 7, 9 and 23 have been cancelled. Claims 24-26 have been newly

added.

3.   The rejection of claims 12, 13, and 16-20 under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the

claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter has been withdrawn due to

amendments.

4.   The rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Halvorson et al. (hereinafter Halvorson, "Microsoft Office XP Inside

Out," published in 2001) in view of Michelman et al. (hereinafter Michelman, US Patent

Number 5,987,481, issued November 16, 1999) has been withdrawn due to

amendments, a new grounds of rejection has been presented below.

Specification

5.   The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for

the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction

of the following is required: The phrase "computer-readable storage medium," is not

found to have proper antecedent basis in the specification, however it is necessary to

use this terminology in order to properly define the claim within the boundaries of

statutory subject matter, because the phrase "computer-readable storage medium,"

appears to only reasonably convey hardware storage and forms of portable, physical

article media to one of ordinary skill in the art. In order to overcome the objection, an

amendment to the specification is necessary constituting a non-exhaustive statement of

what the phrase "computer-readable storage medium" would be as it would have been

known to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, in order to verify that

the term "computer-readable storage medium," could not be taken in the context of non-

statutory subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6.   The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can

be found in a prior Office action.

7.   Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16-18, 20, 22, and 24-26 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Halvorson et al. (hereinafter Halvorson,

"Microsoft Office XP Inside Out," published in 2001) in view of Michelman et al.

(hereinafter Michelman, US Patent Number 5,987,481, issued November 16, 1999),

further in view of Advanced Excel Find (hereinafter AEF, as taught by the AEF

documents published on October 18, 2002 and June 2, 2003).

Regarding independent claim 1, Halvorson discloses receiving a selection of

multiple spreadsheets and multiple portions of those spreadsheets via a graphical

control panel (pages 689-693 of Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that the data portions

are retrieved and appended to the generated final report spreadsheet, including

appending information identifying the sources of the data portions (pages 694-697 of

Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that receiving a selection of portions of data

comprising setting functions (predefined) for desired text in the spreadsheet (pages

694-697 of Halvorson). Halvorson does not explicitly disclose that searching the

spreadsheet for elements fulfills the functions. However, Michelman discloses that

spreadsheet are searched in order to generate a list of labels within the spreadsheet

that match the custom label references identified in the formula (column 1, line 56-

column 3, line 25 of Michelman), thus the custom stored function is used as a

predefined search to identify portions of data. It would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill in the art to have combined the teachings of Halvorson with the teachings

of Michelman because it would have allowed the spreadsheet program to automatically

select the portions of the spreadsheet that reference the elements the user would like to

be included in functions.

Neither Halvorson nor Michelman disclose having a graphic control panel that

allows the selection of subsets or portions of the spreadsheets for searching. However,

AEF teaches that a graphic control panel may be used within the framework of Excel's

built in Find feature to allow the user to select for searching subsets/portions of any and

all workbooks and worksheets ("Search in selection" and "Find in selection" on page 1

of AEF, published October 18, 2002). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary

skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of

Halvorson and Michelman with the teachings of AEF because it would have made the

process of searching in Excel more effective and comfortable.

Regarding dependent claims 2, 4, and 6, Halvorson discloses the ability to make a selection of a workbook, a worksheet (by filename), and any portion of a worksheet including cells, rows, columns, etc. to be used in the creation of the final report spreadsheet (pages 689-693 of Halvorson).

Regarding dependent claim 8, Halvorson discloses that additional data not found in the selected spreadsheets may also be obtained and appended via statistical functions to the final report spreadsheet (pages 694, first paragraph under "Consolidating..." of Halvorson).

Regarding independent claim 10, Halvorson discloses receiving a selection of multiple spreadsheets and multiple portions of those spreadsheets via a graphical control panel (pages 689-693 of Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that the data portions are searched for and retrieved and appended to the generated final report spreadsheet, including appending information identifying the sources of the data portions (pages 694-697 of Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that receiving a selection of portions of data comprising setting functions (predefined) for desired text in the spreadsheet (pages 694-697 of Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that the resulting spreadsheet contains data identifying sources of the portions of data which includes both workbook and spreadsheet names (pages 693-697 see "Linking..." and "Consolidating..." of Halvorson). Halvorson does not explicitly disclose that searching the spreadsheet for elements fulfills the functions. However, Michelman discloses that spreadsheet are searched in order to generate a list of labels within the spreadsheet that match the label references identified in the formula (column 1, line 56-column 3, line 25 of Michelman),

thus the predefined function is used as a predefined search to identify portions of data.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have combined the

teachings of Halvorson with the teachings of Michelman because it would have allowed

the spreadsheet program to automatically select the portions of the spreadsheet that

reference the elements the user would like to be included in functions.

Neither Halvorson nor Michelman disclose having a graphic control panel that

allows the selection of all workbooks for searching purposes. However, AEF teaches

that a graphic control panel may be used within the framework of Excel's built in Find

feature to allow the user to select for searching any and all workbooks and worksheets

(page 1 of AEF, published June 2, 2003). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary

skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of

Halvorson and Michelman with the teachings of AEF because it would have made the

process of searching in Excel more effective and comfortable.

Regarding independent claim 12, Halvorson discloses receiving a selection of

multiple spreadsheets and multiple portions of those spreadsheets via a graphical

control panel (pages 689-693 of Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that the data portions

are identified in predetermined functions and retrieved and appended to the generated

final report spreadsheet, including appending information identifying the sources of the

data portions (pages 694-697 of Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that receiving a

selection of portions of data comprising setting functions (predefined) for desired text in

the spreadsheet (pages 694-697 of Halvorson). Halvorson discloses that the resulting

spreadsheet contains data identifying sources of the portions of data which includes

both workbook and spreadsheet names (pages 693-697 see "Linking..." and "Consolidating..." of Halvorson). Halvorson does not explicitly disclose that searching the spreadsheet for elements fulfills the functions. However, Michelman discloses that spreadsheet are searched in order to generate a list of labels within the spreadsheet that match the label references identified in the formula (column 1, line 56-column 3, line 25 of Michelman), thus the predefined function is used as a predefined search to identify portions of data. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have combined the teachings of Halvorson with the teachings of Michelman because it would have allowed the spreadsheet program to automatically select the portions of the spreadsheet that reference the elements the user would like to be included in functions.

Neither Halvorson nor Michelman disclose having a graphic control panel that allows the selection of all workbooks for searching purposes. However, AEF teaches that a graphic control panel may be used within the framework of Excel's built in Find feature to allow the user to select for searching any and all workbooks and worksheets (page 1 of AEF, published on June 2, 2003). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Halvorson and Michelman with the teachings of AEF because it would have made the process of searching in Excel more effective and comfortable.

Regarding dependent claims 13, 16, and 17, Halvorson discloses the ability to open a workbook, all workbooks open, and one or more worksheets and then select data from within the opened files (pages 689-693 of Halvorson).

Regarding dependent claim 18, Halvorson discloses the use of a status

indicator in the graphical control panel (page 605, Figure 21-1).

Regarding dependent claim 20, Halvorson discloses at least one window is

used to receive selection of spreadsheets and the portions within those spreadsheets

(pages 694-697 of Halvorson).

Regarding dependent claim 22, Halvorson discloses that receiving a selection

of portions of data comprising setting functions (predefined) for desired text in the

spreadsheet (pages 694-697 of Halvorson). Halvorson does not explicitly disclose that

searching the spreadsheet for elements fulfills the predetermined functions. However,

Michelman discloses that spreadsheet are searched in order to generate a list of labels

within the spreadsheet that match the label references identified in the formula (column

1, line 56-column 3, line 25 of Michelman), thus the predefined function is used as a

predefined search to identify portions of data. It would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill in the art to have combined the teachings of Halvorson with the teachings

of Michelman because it would have allowed the spreadsheet program to automatically

select the portions of the spreadsheet that reference the elements the user would like to

be included in functions.

Regarding dependent claims 24 and 25, Halvorson discloses that the resulting

spreadsheet contains data identifying sources of the portions of data which includes

both workbook and spreadsheet names (pages 693-697 see "Linking…" and

"Consolidating…" of Halvorson).

Regarding dependent claim 26, Halvorson discloses that the graphical control panel is used as a consolidation tool (pages 693-697 see "Linking..." and "Consolidating..." of Halvorson).

8.   Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Halvorson et al. (hereinafter Halvorson, "Microsoft Office XP Inside Out," published in 2001) in view of Michelman et al. (hereinafter Michelman, US Patent Number 5,987,481, issued November 16, 1999) in view of Advanced Excel Find (hereinafter AEF, as taught by the AEF documents published on October 18, 2002 and June 2, 2003), further in view of Anson (US Patent Application Publication Number 2003/0061193, filed September 24, 2001).

Regarding dependent claim 19, none of Halvorson, Michelman, or AEF disclose using an event logger to tracking the events that take place during processing. However, Anson teaches logging events in the system during processing and presenting that log to a user (page 1, paragraph 0006 of Anson). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have combined the teachings of Halvorson, Michelman, and AEF with the teachings of Anson because analyzing and examining entries in a log would have allowed a user to prevent errors from reoccurring.

Response to Arguments

9.   Applicant's arguments filed 3/26/2008 have been fully considered but they are

not persuasive.

Regarding the arguments on page 6-7, in reference to claim 1 and the newly

amended limitation dealing with searching a subset of rows and columns, the

arguments are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection. AEF teaches that a

graphic control panel may be used within the framework of Excel's built in Find feature

to allow the user to select for searching subsets/portions of any and all workbooks and

worksheets ("Search in selection" and "Find in selection" on page 1 of AEF, published

October 18, 2002).

Regarding the arguments on page 7-8, in reference to claim 8 and the newly

amended limitation dealing with automatically appending data not contained in the

original spreadsheets, the arguments are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Halvorson discloses that additional data not found in the selected spreadsheets may

also be obtained and appended via statistical functions to the final report spreadsheet

(pages 694, first paragraph under "Consolidating..." of Halvorson). The resulting data of

those statistical functions is neither calculated manually nor is it contained in the original

spreadsheets.

Regarding the arguments on pages 8-11, in reference to independent claims 10

and 12 and the newly amended limitations dealing with appending the spreadsheet and

workbook names to the report, the arguments are moot in view of the new grounds of

rejection. Halvorson discloses that the resulting spreadsheet contains data identifying

sources of the portions of data which includes both workbook and spreadsheet names (pages 693-697 see "Linking..." and "Consolidating..." of Halvorson, See specifically the final paragraph on page 693, which continues onto 694). This provides a basis for the idea that the Workbook and spreadsheet names are not only appended, but rather they are required to properly access the data to be consolidated because without knowledge of the workbook/spreadsheet the data exists in the data could not be accessed.

Regarding the arguments on page 11, in reference to dependent claim 18 and the control panel having a status indicator, the examiner maintains the rejection is proper. Halvorson discloses the use of a status indicator in the graphical control panel (page 605, Figure 21-1). Excel and all other Microsoft Office XP programs contain a status indicator, which is clearly shown in Figure 21-1 on page 605, in this case the indicator is in the form of a "Status Bar". It is unclear to the examiner how the language of claim 18 provides any basis for the interpretation of the claim in a way that overcomes the rejection based on the notoriously well-known teachings of a "Status Bar" as found in Halvorson.

Regarding the arguments on pages 11 and 12, in reference to claims 19 and 24-26, the examiner maintains the rejections are proper in view of the response to previously made arguments found above.

Conclusion

10.   Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOSHUA D. CAMPBELL whose telephone number is (571)272-4133. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30 AM - 4:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Hong can be reached on (571) 272-4124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

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Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a

USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information

system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Joshua D Campbell/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2178
June 19, 2008